

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE



*A Publication Concerned With
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

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Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

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Welcome New Members

Ottawa Area

Dagmara Brunst & Family

Patricia Diane Chuba

Hume Douglas & Family

Angela Khoury

David A. Lewis & Family

Ron Lorensen & Family

Thierry Paiement

Brett Stevens & Family

Dennis J. Teskey & Family

Christel Woodward

Yi Zhang & Family

Henry Steger

Chair, Membership Committee

August 2010

The President's Perspective

Rich Club, Poor Club

You may have heard references to the Club not having enough revenue to cover its expenses. Conversely, you may have heard that the Club recently made generous donations to the Nature Conservancy to help purchase critical parcels of land in Eastern Ontario. How can these seemingly contradictory situations both be true?

While most members tend to yawn at the mention of Club finances, it is important to understand the major dynamics in order to comprehend some changes that are, or may be, in the works. An analogy with an individual might be the easiest way to paint this picture. For those of you more conversant with financial statements, please just bear with me.



Assume a person, let's call her Heather Birch, is earning a salary of \$50,000. She has received an inheritance from Uncle Clay and another from Aunt Fern giving her a total investment portfolio of about \$200,000. Every year she also gets about \$3,000 in monetary gifts for birthdays and Christmas.

The challenge for Heather Birch is that she spends about \$60,000 each year. Furthermore, she is uncertain about future expenses related to her house and her job might be cut in the next round of budget cuts. She would also like to continue supporting the environmental projects that her Uncle Clay and Aunt Fern had supported in their lifetime.

Heather is looking at ways to reduce her expenses so that they are covered by the combination of her salary and monetary gifts and she would no longer have to eat into her investment funds. Instead, she could keep these funds as a cushion in case of future needs and possibly also make environmental donations.

Is Heather Birch rich or is she poor? Some of her friends think she is crazy to be worrying about her budget when she has 'all that money.' Others think she is on a slippery slope because she is not living within her means.

You can easily see the connection between Heather Birch and the OFNC. On average, over the last six years, expenses have exceeded revenues by \$20,000 per year. Some losses have been covered by the annual donations that are received with membership dues (Heather's birthday and Christmas presents). Beyond that the Club

has had to dip into its investments or at least the interest earned on them. Fortunately we have received several sizeable bequests over the years (our Aunt Ferns and Uncle Clays). However, it would be folly to continue with a financial plan that relied on a steady supply of bequests. Like Heather, we need to make modifications so that annual revenues will cover annual expenses. Then we can treat the bequests as the gifts they are.

In keeping with the mission of the Club, and the spirit of the bequests, we have made a couple of major donations to the Nature Conservancy of Canada over the last couple of years. One donation helped with the purchase of property just north of Kingston in the Frontenac Arch (connecting Algonquin Park and the Adirondacks). The most recent donation assisted with the purchase of property off Wolf Grove Road in Almonte. Some members might be familiar with this property that was owned by Martha Webber. We agreed that it was important to keep this land for conservation and study purposes.

What are some of the uncertainties that might lie ahead for the Club? We are not likely to lose our job, like Heather, but membership numbers are declining. Each year there are more members not renewing than there are new members joining. Declining interest rates have impacted interest earnings. Some tasks might require contracting out in the future as it is more difficult to find volunteers.

We are in the process of putting the CFN online in keeping with the current practice of other scientific journals. Money must be kept aside until we are more certain about the cash flows related to this transition. A couple of years ago we started sending CFN to only those members who requested it, thereby reducing our printing and mailing costs. Now, with the switch to electronic publishing, the journal will only be available electronically unless a member chooses to pay extra for a hard copy.

Some other naturalist clubs have already changed their member publication to an electronic version, eliminating a hard copy. We are considering what we should do with *Trail and Landscape*. No changes are in the works at the moment.

One thing that is important to the Club is that it be accessible to as many people as possible. For this reason we are not trying to balance the books by charging for the monthly meetings or walks and we even encourage non-members to attend. While we had a small increase in the membership fees a few years ago, we prefer to get more members than to raise the cost to existing members. However, changes in administrative and committee budgets will be needed.

So, are we a rich club or a poor club? It all depends on what part of the financial picture you are looking at. If you would like to get involved in discussions of how we should manage the Club's financial situation then please come to one of the monthly meetings and raise the issue. You may also send me an email at annmackenzie@rogers.com. I cannot always respond to emails in a timely fashion since we travel a lot. I would also encourage everyone to come to our January meeting when we discuss the business aspects of the Club.

Ann MacKenzie

The 49th Annual Ottawa Regional Science Fair—OFNC Awards

Jeff Skevington¹ and Carolyn Callaghan²

This year, the Ottawa Regional Science Fair was held on April 10 at Hillcrest High School. Students in grades 7-12 submitted about 200 projects to the Fair this year. This is always a fabulous showcase of projects and ideas by our next generation of scientists.

Every year the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club presents three awards to groups that present excellent projects related to natural history or to Club ideals. If you know any students in this age group, please encourage them to conduct natural history research projects for future science fairs. If you need help with ideas for projects, we will be happy to assist.



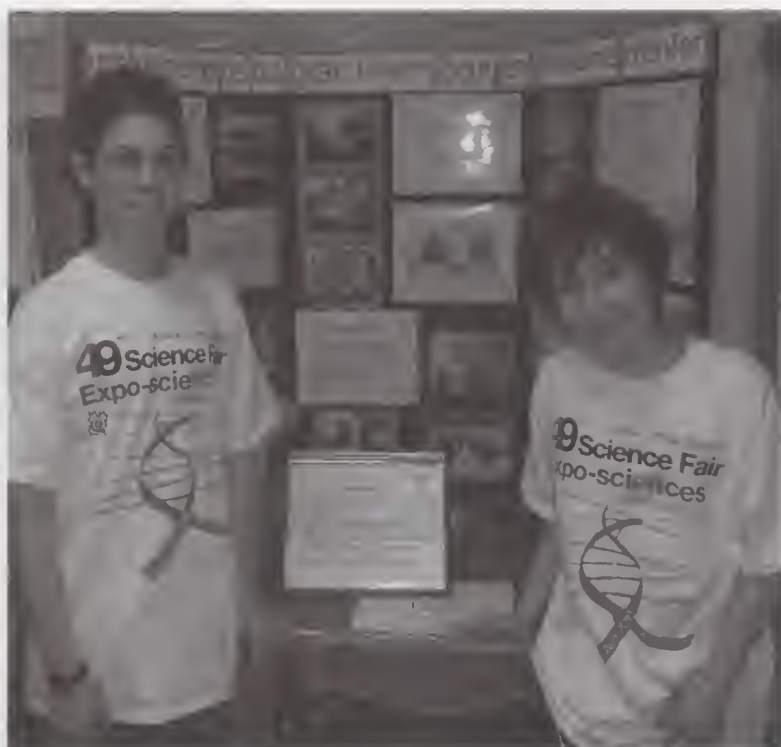
¹ jeffrey.skevington@agr.gc.ca, ² naturechelsea@gmail.com

The following students each won an award of \$50 and an OFNC club membership.

Tannya Cai: *Taraxacum officinale*. The Dandelion. The Official Remedy for Disorders. Elmwood School. Tannya presented an interesting project that explored the medicinal properties of dandelions. She conducted a survey of over 100 people to investigate current uses of dandelions as natural medicines and followed this with an experiment that introduced bacteria into media containing different dandelion mixtures (it was a huge amount of work!). Her data provided compelling evidence that dandelions impede the growth of bacteria. In addition to her research, she produced an excellent pamphlet on dandelions and their medicinal uses. In addition to the OFNC prize, Tannya also won a silver medal within her age class and category.

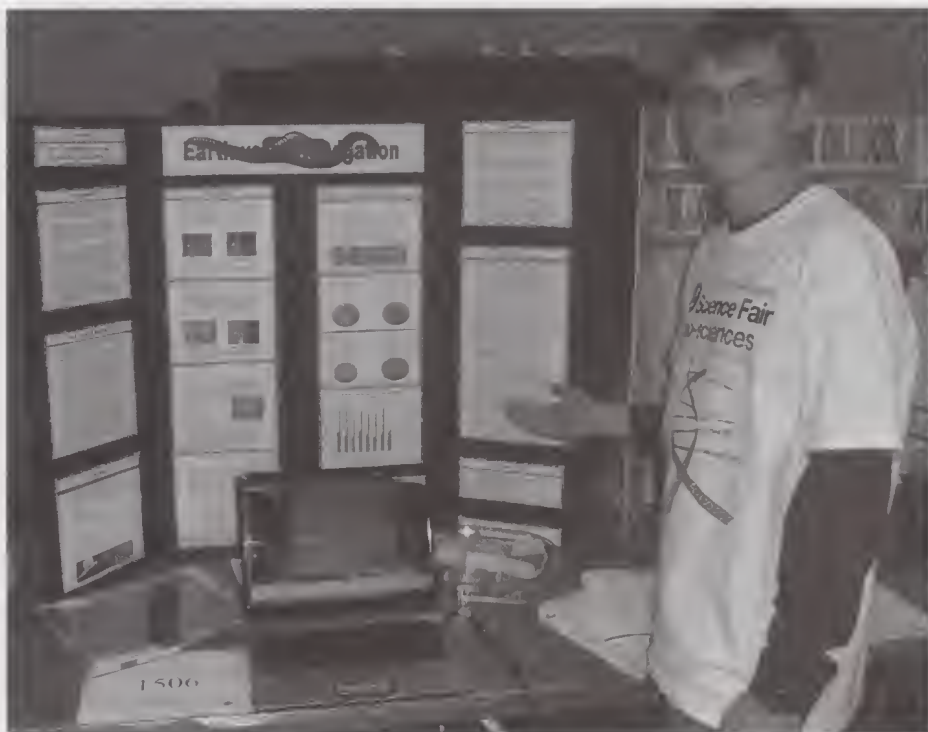
Simon Larivière and Jérémie Venne: Une recette de ma grand-mère pour un problème d'enfer

(My Grandma's Recipe for a Heck of a Problem). École secondaire catholique Franco-Cité. Simon and Jérémie decided to try to find a novel solution to deal with the Alberta tar sands tailing ponds. These



ponds cause the death of 8,000 to as many as 100,000 birds per year, particularly waterfowl that are killed when they land in the ponds during migration. They proposed using sponge candy as a temporary and non-toxic covering to the tailing ponds. Sponge candy floats on oil and was proposed to prevent birds from landing (it would no longer look like a lake to the birds) and keep them out of the oil if they

did land. They experimented with load bearing capacity of the sponge and longevity of the sponge in water under different temperatures. They hypothesized that this method could be successfully implemented on a large scale in typical cool spring conditions.



Adamo Young: Turnbull School. Adamo also won the OFNC prize last year for a project on the use of earthworms for detection of soil salinity and acidity. He is a member of the Macoun Field Club. He adapted and expanded last year's effort and produced an excellent project this year that also won a silver medal for the fair in his age class and category. A container was divided into six compartments to examine earthworm preferences for different moisture and light conditions. Earthworm movements were then quantified and their preferences were established. He showed that they statistically spend much more time following edges and suggested that this was an advantage for quickly moving through a suboptimal environment to find a better area. Adamo then went on to test whether or not earthworms have the capacity to learn. He found some evidence for this as two individuals returned repeatedly to containers with preferred conditions; however, most of his subjects died before enough data could be collected. It will be interesting to see what he discovers if he follows up on this.

Producing *Trail & Landscape* by computer for a quarter of a century

Joyce M. Reddoch

The first issue of *Trail & Landscape* appeared in the spring of 1967. I typed that first issue in Editor Anne Hanes' dining room on a rented IBM Selectric typewriter. Gary Hanes, Anne's husband, was the proofreader. I was just a plodding, forty-words-a-minute volunteer typist, so there were quite a few corrections to be made. Gary blocked out the incorrect letters or words with whiteout, which was a fast-drying, opaque paint. Then I had to align the text in the typewriter so that I could type in the correct letter or word over the whiteout. After the first issue, more proficient volunteers typed the text, on rented or borrowed typewriters or on the machines in the office of the Director of the National Museum of Natural Sciences (Canadian Museum of Nature). After the text had been typed and proofread by volunteers, Harry Thomson, and subsequently I, cut-and-pasted the titles and diagrams.

And that's the way *Trail & Landscape* was produced through Anne's 13 years as editor and half way through the following decade when I was the editor. All that changed in 1985 when my husband, Allan Reddoch, brought home his first purchase of a personal computer (PC), an Apple 2+ clone equipped with WordStar word-processing software. We saw a PC as a tool to replace a typewriter and to do scientific calculations. We were not aware of its potential to connect to an internet that could provide email or search facilities.

Before the end of 1985, the Club had bought me a Juki daisywheel printer, and from then on *Trail & Landscape* was produced by computer. I chose the Prestige Elite and Italics fonts for the printer to match those used on the IBM typewriter so that there would be no obvious change to the look of the journal. Now the pages rolled out of the printer one after the other, and errors were easy to correct. But, when there were words to be printed in italics, the process was a bit more awkward than with the typewriter. With the latter, one simply stopped typing, replaced the Prestige Elite ball with the Italics ball for the words that needed to be in Italics. With the daisywheel printer, I had to insert a Stop command to stop the printer before and after each word. At each stop I exchanged the Elite and Italics Daisywheels and then activated the printer to continue printing. Producing a species list with both scientific and common names was good exercise, for both me and the printer. I still

had to cut-and-paste the titles and diagrams.

Elizabeth Morton succeeded me in 1990. She used a PC provided by the Club's Computer Committee, with WordPerfect for word processing and Ventura for layout. Her camera-ready pages that went to the press were printed out on a laser printer, also provided by the Computer Committee.

Fenja Brodo took over the editing in 1991. The Club supplied her with a computer equipped with WordPerfect and Ventura, as well as a printer. Suzanne Blain set up the pages—margins, numbering, style sheets and other details—and taught Fenja how to use the software. David Thomson, a Ventura user in his working life, frequently came over to get her out of a computer jam, but the work load was quite time-consuming, so she asked for help and Sandra Gushue came to her rescue. Sandra took the Club's computer and printer and from then on prepared the camera-ready copy. Since many authors were giving Fenja their texts on 5" floppy disks, there was very little that had to be retyped. Authors hand-delivered their floppies or paper manuscripts, or Fenja went to pick them up. Fenja found that this was a great way to meet so many nice members of our Club. Then Sandra and Fenja exchanged material in a "drive-by" downtown during Sandra's lunch hour, and a few days later, they would spend a long evening together at Sandra's house putting together the camera-ready copy. Bill Gummer, the Associate Editor, was an excellent proof-reader. Bill took over as editor for the year that Fenja and Ernie spent in Scandinavia, and Alan German became Sandra's computer guru when things went wrong.

By the time Karen McLachlan Hamilton followed Fenja in 2001, WordPerfect had become versatile enough to prepare *Trail & Landscape* from the manuscript stage onwards. Now most manuscripts are sent to her by email, more or less already formatted, and are easily converted into pdf files and forward electronically to the printer. Most of the images are also received electronically, but to ensure the images remain at their highest quality, they continue to be inserted into the issue by the commercial printer. Since the software of choice now is Microsoft Word, perhaps the next phase should be to use it to produce *Trail & Landscape*.

I enjoyed communicating with Elizabeth, Fenja and Karen (by email, of course) while putting this article together. Many thanks to them for sharing their memories with me. Although the transitions through the computer age are obvious, the other notable change in the editor's job is the ongoing reduction in driving time. Until Karen's time, the editors spent a good deal of time picking up manuscripts and graphics, delivering paper copy to proofreaders, delivering the final copy to the printers and returning there to check the proofs. My most interesting pickup was of a birding manuscript in a refrigerator in the enclosed back porch of a house in the

Glebe. Talk about subversive operations!

Editing *Trail & Landscape* has been an adventure for all of us. And now, in 2010, we can celebrate that *Trail & Landscape* has been produced by computer for more than half of its 44 years.

It's not too late! (It's never too late, in fact!)

Annie Bélair

The Macoun Field Club's 2010-2011 season has already started, but children ages 8-16 are welcome to try out the OFNC's young naturalists' club anytime!

We meet Saturday mornings, alternating between an indoor talk and a field trip. Here's one small part of what we do in our Study Area in the Greenbelt, as explained by the 2009-2010 president of the younger group, Dawn Seburn:

Two years ago the Macoun Club started a study on a swamp ant called Lasius minutus. The ants are yellowish brown. They have built hundreds of large mounds in an ash swamp at Stony Swamp, and farm root aphids underground. We are concerned that these aphids may feed only on the roots of ash trees. This could be bad because when the introduced Emerald Ash Borer eventually kills all the ash trees in our Study Area, the Lasius minutus ants might die out, too.

You can read more about our Lasius Project at:

<http://www.magma.ca/~rel/mfc/studyarea/Lasproj.html>, or have a look at our schedule at: <http://www.magma.ca/~rel/mfc/memories/summer.html>.

For more information, contact Barbara (613-741-2564) or Rob (613-623-8123).

A Delicate Operation

Jack Holliday

Most years I grow a few tomato plants behind the garage. Not the best place, but they do grow fairly well. I have found that if I spread black garden cloth, it keeps the weeds from growing. The cloth is sold in rolls in garden centres. The roll I used last year was leaning in a corner of the greenhouse last autumn.

When I reached for the cloth, it partly unfolded and revealed a queen *Polistes* wasp hanging to her new cone. It was about the size of a “loonie” and had perhaps 10 cells. The queen turned toward me and made a threatening motion, which meant “go away.”



Polistes queen on her cone in a fold of cloth. Note the left hand of the photographer unfolds the cloth while the right hand holds the camera.

Each year *Polistes* wasps attach their cones to the garage eaves, and various places inside the greenhouse. The wasps and I have a mutual respect for each other, and I rarely give them any problems. I needed the roll of cloth, but was apprehensive about disturbing "her Majesty." I considered the problem for awhile, and concluded that if I was **very** careful, I could cut away the cloth portion to which the cone was attached.

Of course, *Polistes* wasps are polite, unlike the irascible Yellow Jackets and the fearsome Bald-faced Hornets. I've been stung by both, and it is not pleasant. As so, gingerly, I carried the roll outside and cautiously cut away the portion with the cone of cells and laid it to one side.

Back inside the greenhouse, a nail was hammered into a support in the approximate area where the roll was leaning. A hole was cut in the "queen's" section of the cloth and it was carefully carried inside and hung on the nail.

Throughout the procedure, "her Majesty" waved her front legs at me and threatened a launch but her precious progeny meant more to her than driving me away, so she clung tightly to the cone.

I was pleased that the soon-to-be colony was saved, and doubly so that I didn't get stung. The wasps are largely beneficial, and they feed their young chewed-up caterpillars and beetle larvae. They harvest the

troublesome larvae of the Red Lily Beetle, among other

prey. Any lily grower knows what a serious pest this beetle is. I fear for the vulnerable native lilies of Canada and the USA.



Second nest on an unused plastic pot. Note: three wasps, did not sting the photographer.

Perhaps some of our other native wasps will help to control the Lily Leaf Beetle? We sure hope so.

Celebrating 20 years of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden: How did we get from there to here?

Christine Hanrahan



FWG group shot in the Backyard Garden

A little bit of history: The early days

While looking around at the large gathering of old friends who came to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden on June 19, 2010, the lines from the Beatle's iconic song kept running through my head: "It was twenty years ago today. . . ."* For it was indeed twenty years ago, in June, that the Fletcher Wildlife Garden was officially dedicated. And from that moment on, the garden has grown, both literally and metaphorically, becoming a well-known destination for

*From the song, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.

nature lovers, birders, photographers, and people who just like to take a stroll around a little bit of countryside tucked inside the city.

However, the garden didn't just happen with a magical wave of somebody's wand. Long before that dedication ceremony, work had been ongoing to not only find the right location, but to define what the garden should be. The concept of the garden arose with Peter and Judy Hall and Jeff Harrison, when ideas were being tossed around for celebrating the nationally designated Year of Wildlife, "Wildlife '87." Out of the many ideas proposed to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club (OFNC), that of creating a garden for wildlife in an urban setting was the most appealing.

An article in *Trail & Landscape* (1987) outlined the reasons why such a garden was an excellent idea. Written at that time by the Conservation Committee, it surmised that many city dwellers would welcome information on how to create a garden attractive to "birds, butterflies and other wildlife." The article noted that "In this year of Wildlife '87, The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club is undertaking a project to help supply some of that planning skill and knowledge to all city dwellers with even a remote urge to 'countryfy' their backyard."

The committee, which had taken the lead in the project, asked for volunteers to help make this vision a reality. At that point no location had been found, although several were under consideration. The committee, via the article, explained that the final choice for the site would "depend on such factors as location, growing conditions, local community considerations, access, variety of habitats, site enhancement possibilities and conditions placed on use of the land." (IBID)

By late fall 1988, the OFNC reported that discussions "are being carried out with City of Ottawa officials about a possible site at Britannia. This position looks hopeful" (Campbell 1988). I can only imagine how very different the garden would be if it had been provided land at Britannia. Not worse or better, but different.

Behind the scenes work continued and at last the wildlife garden was officially dedicated at the chosen location, the Central Experimental Farm. Peter Hall reported that on "Sunday, June 10, 1990, about 1,400 participants came out to the site in the Dominion Arboretum at the Central Experimental Farm to witness the ceremony and take a tour of the proposed location" (Hall 1990). Apparently it poured with rain except for one golden hour, when the actual ceremonial planting of a butternut tree was being performed (a good omen!) by the various representatives from interested organizations: the OFNC, Agriculture Canada, Friends of the Farm, the National Capital Commission, Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. An illustrious gathering of interested parties. Imagine 1,400 people attending such an event! Well, the whole idea of that type of "demonstration" garden was new to Ottawa, and during the early '90s a new wave of green

consciousness had swept the land (later to be diminished when the economy took a turn for the worse), so one can imagine how exciting this project was. I was still living in BC at the time, but when I returned to Ottawa in 1993, I too was swept up in the enthusiasm and became an FWG volunteer, and still am.

Many people came forward to help in those early days. As Peter noted (1990), long before the official dedication, they cleaned up the site, removing 25 bags of garbage! And already the redoubtable team of Bill Holland (after whom our trail is named) and George McGee were compiling an inventory of birds.

Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources provided funding for the detailed design and plan for the garden by David Tomlinson. Tomlinson went on to win an award for his design from the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects. While we have not followed the plan down to the smallest detail, we have carried out the spirit of the plan very well, I think. The creation of a new woods, the planting of many nut and fruit bearing trees, etc. Interestingly, Peter noted that it “could take about 20 years for the trees planted to reach a height sufficient to act as cover for birds and other animals.” He was just about right on! The trees only achieved their real growth spurt about six years ago.

The site of the newly planted trees, 20 years ago, was a mowed meadow. Now it is a woodlot (the New Woods), dense with trees and shrubs and many birds nest there, and many small animals find cover and denning sites. Where our Amphibian Pond now sits, was once a grassy dip in the land, mowed regularly. Now it supports turtles, frogs, aquatic insects, nesting Red-winged Blackbirds, muskrats, the occasional beaver, waterfowl, etc. Our Old Field habitat was once a cornfield. The Ash Woodlot, 20 years ago, was more reminiscent of Capability Brown’s vision of a grand garden, lots of scattered trees with mowed grass, no understory or herbaceous cover. The Butterfly Meadow was also once a slice of mowed grass. And the Backyard Garden, was a flat site covered only with grass, not a flower in sight.

The magical transformation was not really the result of magic, but of sheer hard labour by dozens and dozens of volunteers over the preceding 20 years, and continuing today, of course.

When we realized that it was the 20th year of the garden’s existence we decided a celebration was called for. Of course, it should be in June, 2010, and naturally we must invite as many of the “old-timers” as we could find. Some had vanished and no amount of searching could provide their current whereabouts. However, we were surprisingly lucky at finding scores of former volunteers, and while not all could attend, a very large number did.

The Party

I think the weather gods were with us on that day we celebrated the FWG's existence. It poured rain while we were setting up, a drenching, soaking rain, compounded by wind. Barbara Riley and I were trying to affix decorations to the outside of the building in all this. Inside, Claudia Burns was laying out the food. And we all wondered whether anyone would come! Several people did phone in fact, asking if the party was still on. We had long since decided to have the food inside and gather outside if weather permitted. And weather did permit. The party was scheduled to begin at 2:00 p.m. and a few minutes before, the rain stopped, the skies cleared, and the sun came out and blessed our event!

We needn't have worried that the weather would deter people. Scores of people streamed into the centre and gathered outside. There was much exclaiming at the sight of old friends and acquaintances, people who worked on the project in the early days, planting trees, carving out the shape of the Backyard Garden, and sitting on the Management Committee.



Peter, Jeff and Eileen

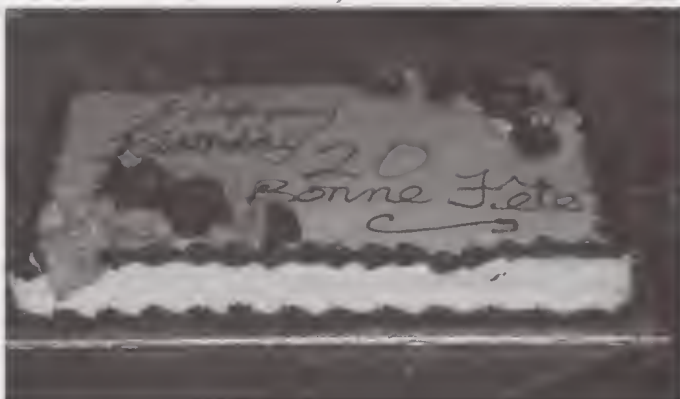
Shortly after 2:00, our MC for the event, FWG Chair, Sandra Garland, introduced the founders of the garden, Peter Hall and Jeff Harrison. They provided a fascinating, engaging overview of the garden's history, and added lots of terrific personal anecdotes and reminiscences as well. For those who missed those formative years it was a revelation. For others who were there, it was a trip down memory lane.

Following Peter and Jeff, Eileen Chivers provided a truly entertaining account of how the BYG came to be. Eileen is a landscape architect, and her involvement from day one was critical to the success of the garden. She had the background, the expertise, and the contacts to get things done right. Looking at the BYG now, full of curves and hidden corners, a pond, a woodland walk, flourishing flowers, tall trees,

shrubs, stone walls, patio, rock garden, and so on, it is nearly impossible to imagine it as a flat square of grass! This is a tribute to what a vision and hard work can achieve.

After the illuminating talks by Jeff, Peter and Eileen, folk gathered in the BYG for a group shot, a marvelous reminder of a special day. Then everyone was invited back into the centre for snacks and the cake-cutting ceremony. Yes, we had a specially made cake for the occasion, and it went down well! The rest of the time was spent chatting and reminiscing, viewing the display of before and after photos, and exploring the BYG.

Special thanks to Claudia Burns, Diane Lepage and Barbara Riley for helping with the set-up of the centre, the food and the decorations. I was relieved to have such a great team helping! And a big thank you to Jeff, Peter and Eileen for the



FWG 20th Anniversary cake

delightful and memory-inducing accounts of the early days. It was a true delight to see all the folk who came out to help us celebrate. Many, many thanks to all those who helped with creating the garden we see today, to those who sat on the early Management Committee, who supported the garden in so many ways. And of course, kudos to all those wonderful volunteers who carry on today and keep the garden going.

If you would like to take a photographic journey through the early days of the FWG, please check out our gallery of photos at: <http://www.pbase.com/fwg/history>.

Photos by C. Hanrahan.

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OFNC Trip to Point Pelee National Park and Rondeau Provincial Park 2010

Roy John

Day 1, 13 May 2010

A group of 40 OFNC members boarded a silver bus at Lincoln Fields promptly at 0545. The driver, Jean-Yves, did his last safety check and told me there was a problem. The rear driver's wheel brake had locked. We would need a new bus.

At 0730 we were all aboard another blue bus and set off for Point Pelee National Park. Under a cloudy sky we got as far as Port Hope when Jean-Yves said we had another problem. The air conditioner had failed and the bus was approaching 30°C. We would need another bus.

As we now had several hours to kill, we went to Oshawa Second Marsh, 123 ha of lakeshore wetland, meadows and woodlot habitats. A walk around this site, under threatening skies, introduced us to many new migrants. Most notable were the large number of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and a pair of Trumpeter Swans.

Before the rain came we made it back to the bus, but still had some time to wait. We drove to a mall in Whitby and went shopping for our picnic supplies and had an early supper. Our original silver bus—now repaired—arrived and we transferred back to bus three!

We travelled through intermittent bouts of very heavy rain to Leamington, arriving just after 11 pm.

Day 2, 14 May 2010

During breakfast it rained very hard for 10 minutes. Then we climbed aboard the bus at 0545 [at least all but one did] and left for Point Pelee National Park, a 10-kilometre long sandspit of 20 square kilometres. It juts into Lake Erie and is a fine example of Carolinian forest coupled with marshes and some beach, that attract many migrating birds. We boarded the tram for the Tip, where we walked to the southern most point in mainland Canada to watch a mixed flock of terns, gulls and cormorants fishing a shoal of smelt.

While birds flew in overhead—and some flew south in reverse migration—we wandered through the low shrubby forest towards the visitor's centre. Thanks to the heavy rain there was a large fallout of birds and we began to see a wonderful variety of species. Once again there were lots of gnatcatchers and these were joined by both Baltimore and Orchard Orioles. The common warblers were everywhere, but interspersed were a number of rarer species—Mourning, Golden-winged, Blue-winged and Hooded. The bird that stole the show was a young male Kirtland's Warbler that sang on a branch in full sun—a lifer for everyone but me. [My first in Canada though].

We saw many other types of birds other than warblers, including the always stunning Scarlet Tanagers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Butterflies were also obviously moving, with large numbers of Red Admirals, as in Ottawa, but also at least two Pipevine Swallowtails and a few Monarchs.

After lunch we walked Tilden's Woods, adding to our sightings and some of us had a close encounter with an irate Turkey. There were also a number of interesting wildflowers in bloom, including some lovely patches of Carolina Geranium.

We left the park and went to the Pelee Wings Nature Store which sells wildlife books, jewelry, stationary, bird feeders, clothing, binoculars and telescopes. Outside the store we found Forster's Terns and a Little Gull.

Despite shopping, we still had time for a quick visit to Hillman's Marsh. However, because of the early spring, the vegetation grew quickly and the Conversation Authority did not flood the shorebird cell in time, so there was much less than other years. We did get to see some shorebirds and ducks, and as we left a Great Egret flew in.

We had collectively seen 28 species of warblers during the day!

Day 3, 15 May 2010

We went to Rondeau Provincial Park, leaving at 0600. Rolling across the flat, fertile fields we watched for wildlife, and on the left side of the bus saw a Raccoon before we arrived at the park. At the visitors centre's feeders we saw a Red-bellied Woodpecker along with more common birds. We headed out along the Tulip Trail in the hopes of seeing a Prothonotary Warbler. We failed, but had a wonderful walk along the prettiest trail in Canada. The majestic, huge tulip trees filter the sunlight and give a magical dappled atmosphere.

We continued on to the South Point Trail where we found several Red-headed Woodpeckers. We walked as far as the territory of a Yellow-breasted Chat, but he

failed to show. However there were many species of warblers and other birds to entertain us, including more Red-bellied Woodpeckers. The highlight of this walk was probably a Carolina Saddlebags dragonfly flying and perching at waist height. Two of our group opted to miss this walk and return to the Tulip Tree Trail where they were able to photograph a Prothonotary Warbler.

After lunch we started at the campground and then followed the Harrison Trail. I saw a birder I knew peering through a telescope just off trail. He was looking at a Common Nighthawk and we were all able to see this sleeping bird. Some of the group were lucky enough to see the female Blue Grosbeak that has been at Rondeau for some time.

A weary but contented group were picked up by the bus and headed back to our hotel in Leamington.

Day 4, 16 May 2010

We started the day at 0600, not for the birds but to put us ahead of the Sunday traffic rush in Toronto. This day the drive would be uneventful so we were on schedule when we arrived at Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve, a 16 acre site that protects the last remnant of old-growth white pines on the north shore of Lake Ontario and has one of the oldest hophornbeams. We saw many species of warbler and had good views of Veery. We finally heard, but did not see, a Savannah Sparrow—a species that is suddenly more difficult to find. The last new bird for the trip was a Northern Harrier near Kemptville.

The weather cooperated and was mostly bright and sunny and warm. We were never bothered by bugs and only picked up two ticks. Overall we saw 144 species of birds, with an additional four heard only, eight mammals, seven herptiles plus two heard only, 11 butterflies and at least 105 plants, with the highlights being the young male **Kirtland's Warbler** and **Pipevine Swallowtail** butterfly at Point Pelee, and the **Carolina Saddlebags** dragonfly at Rondeau.

Plants and Fungi from Pelee Rondeau Trip 2010

Plants

Aceraceae

Acer negundo

Acer platanoides

Acer saccharinum

Acer saccharum

Maple Family

Manitoba Maple

Norway Maple

Silver Maple

Sugar Maple

Anacardiaceae*Rhus aromatica**Rhus typhina**Toxicodendron radicans**Toxicodendron rydbergii***Apiaceae***Osmorhiza longistylis***Araceae***Arisaema triphyllum***Araliaceae***Aralia nudicaulis***Asclepiadaceae***Cynanchum rossicum***Asteraceae***Senecio vulgaris**Taraxacum officinale**Tussilago farfara***Berberidaceae***Berberis thunbergii**Podophyllum peltatum***Betulaceae***Betula alleghaniensis**Betula papyrifera**Carpinus caroliniana**Ostrya virginiana***Brassicaceae***Alliaria petiolata**Cardamine diphylla**Cardamine pratensis**Hesperis matronalis**Thlaspi arvense***Caprifoliaceae***Lonicera tatarica**Viburnum acerifolium**Viburnum lentago***Caryophyllaceae***Cerastium fontanum**Silene latifolia***Cornaceae***Cornus alternifolia**Cornus sericea***Sumac Family**

Fragrant Sumac

Staghorn Sumac

Poison-ivy

Rhyberg's Poison-ivy

Carrot Family

Aniseroot

Arum Family

Jack-in-the-Pulpit

Ginseng Family

Wild Sarsaparilla

Milkweed Family

Pale Swallow-Wort

Aster Family

Common Groundsel

Common Dandelion

Colt's -foot

Barberry Family

Japanese Barberry

Mayapple

Birch Family

Yellow Birch

Paper Birch

American Hornbeam

Eastern Hophornbeam

Mustard Family

Garlic-Mustard

Toothwort

Cuckoo-flower

Dame's Rocket

Field Pennycress

Honeysuckle Family

Tartarian Honeysuckle

Mapleleaf Viburnum

Nanny-Berry

Pink Family

Common Mouse-Ear Chickweed

White Cockle

Dogwood Family

Alternate-Leaf Dogwood

Redosier Dogwood

Cupressaceae*Juniperus virginiana**Thuja occidentalis***Dennstaedtiaceae***Pteridium aquilinum***Dipsacaceae***Dipsacus fullonum***Dryopteridaceae***Dryopteris carthusiana**Matteuccia struthiopteris**Onoclea sensibilis***Elaeagnaceae***Elaeagnus angustifolia***Equisetaceae***Equisetum arvense**Equisetum hyemale**Equisetum sylvaticum***Euphorbiaceae***Euphorbia cyparissias***Fagaceae***Fagus grandifolia**Quercus muehlenbergii**Quercus palustris**Quercus rubra***Geraniaceae***Erodium cicutarium**Geranium carolinianum**Geranium robertianum***Grossulariaceae***Ribes* spp.**Hydrophyllaceae***Hydrophyllum appendiculatum**Hydrophyllum virginianum***Iridaceae***Sisyrinchium montanum***Juglandaceae***Carya ovata**Juglans nigra***Lamiaceae***Glechoma hederacea***Cypress Family**

Eastern Red-Cedar

Eastern White-Cedar

Bracken Fern Family

Northern Bracken Fern

Teasel Family

Fuller's Teasel

Wood Fern Family

Spinulose Wood Fern

Ostrich Fern

Sensitive Fern

Oleaster Family

Russian-Olive

Horsetail Family

Field Horsetail

Tall Scouring-Rush

Woodland Horsetail

Spurge Family

Cypress Spurge

Beech Family

American Beech

Chinkapin Oak

Pin Oak

Northern Red Oak

Geranium Family

Red-Stem Stork's-Bill

Carolina Crane's-Bill

Herb-Robert

Currant Family

Currant, Gooseberry

Waterleaf Family

Great Waterleaf

Virginia Waterleaf

Iris Family

Strict Blue-Eyed-Grass

Walnut Family

Shag-Bark Hickory

Black Walnut

Mint Family

Groundivy

Lauraceae

Lindera benzoin

Lemnaceae

Lemna minor

Liliaceae

Asparagus officinalis

Convallaria majalis

Maianthemum canadense

Maianthemum racemosum

Maianthemum stellatum

Narcissus poeticus

Ornithogalum umbellatum

Polygonatum pubescens

Trillium grandiflorum

Uvularia grandiflora

Uvularia perfoliata

Magnoliaceae

Liriodendron tulipifera

Nymphaeaceae

Nuphar lutea

Oleaceae

Fraxinus spp.

Syringa vulgaris

Pinaceae

Pinus strobus

Platanaceae

Platanus occidentalis

Poaceae

Poa annua

Poa pratensis

Polemoniaceae

Phlox divaricata

Portulacaceae

Claytonia virginica

Ranunculaceae

Anemone quinquefolia

Aquilegia canadensis

Ranunculus fascicularis

Thalictrum dioicum

Rhamnaceae

Rhamnus cathartica

Laurel Family

Northern Spicebush

Duckweed Family

Common Duckweed

Lily Family

Asparagus

European Lily-of-the-Valley

False Lily-of-the-Valley

Feathery False Solomon's-Seal

Starry False Solomon's-Seal

Poet's Narcissus

Star-of-Bethlehem

Hairy Solomon's-Seal

White Trillium

Large-Flower Bellwort

Perfoliate Bellwort

Magnolia Family

Tuliptree

Water-Lily Family

Yellow Pond-Lily

Olive Family

Ash

Common Lilac

Pine Family

Eastern White Pine

Planetree Family

American Sycamore

Grass Family

Annual Blue Grass

Kentucky Blue Grass

Phlox Family

Wild Blue Phlox

Purslane Family

Virginia Springbeauty

Buttercup Family

Wood Anemone

Red Columbine

Early Buttercup

Early Meadow-Rue

Buckthorn Family

European Buckthorn

Rosaceae*Crataegus* spp.*Fragaria virginiana**Malus pumila**Prunus pensylvanica**Prunus serotina**Prunus virginiana**Rubus hispidus***Rubiaceae***Galium mollugo***Salicaceae***Populus alba**Populus deltoides**Populus tremuloides**Salix alba***Saxifragaceae***Tiarella cordifolia***Scrophulariaceae***Pedicularis canadensis**Veronica serpyllifolia***Smilacaceae***Smilax rotundifolia***Thelypteridaceae***Thelypteris palustris***Tiliaceae***Tilia americana***Typhaeaceae***Typha latifolia***Ulmaceae***Celtis occidentalis**Ulmus americana***Urticaceae***Urtica dioica***Violaceae***Viola blanda**Viola cucullata**Viola odorata**Viola pubescens***Vitaceae***Parthenocissus quinquefolia**Vitis riparia***Rose Family**

Hawthorn

Virginia Strawberry

Cultivated Apple

Fire Cherry

Black Cherry

Chokecherry

Bristly Dewberry

Madder Family

False Baby's-Breath

Willow Family

White Poplar

Eastern Cottonwood

Quaking Aspen

White Willow

Saxifrage Family

Heartleaf Foamflower

Figwort Family

Canadian Lousewort, Wood Betony

Thyme-Leaf Speedwell

Greenbrier Family

Horsebrier

Maiden Fern Family

Eastern Marsh Fern

Linden Family

American Basswood

Cattail Family

Broadleaf Cattail

Elm Family

Common Hackberry

American Elm

Nettle Family

Stinging Nettle

Violet Family

Sweet White Violet

Marsh Blue Violet

Sweet Violet

Downy Yellow Violet

Grape Family

Virginia Creeper

River-Bank Grape

Fungi

Morchellaceae

Morchella esculenta

Polyporaceae

Polyporus squamosus

Morel Family

Yellow Morel

Bracket Fungi Family

Dryad's Saddle

Amphibians and Reptiles from Pelee Rondeau Trip 2010

Pantherophis gloydi

Eastern Foxsnake

Thamnophis butleri

Butler's Gartersnake

Thamnophis sirtalis

Eastern Gartersnake

Plestiodon fasciatus

Five-lined Skink

Chelydra serpentina

Snapping Turtle

Chrysemys picta marginata

Painted Turtle

Anaxyrus americanus

American Toad

Hyla versicolor

Grey Treefrog -Heard only

Pseudacris crucifer

Spring Peeper -Heard only

Mammals from Pelee Rondeau Trip 2010

Ondatra zibethicus

Muskrat

Tamias striatus

Eastern Chipmunk

Sciurus carolinensis

Grey Squirrel

Marmota monax

Groundhog

Odocoileus virginianus

White-tailed Deer

Sylvilagus floridanus

Eastern Cottontail

Procyon lotor

Raccoon

Canis latrans

Coyote

Birds from Pelee Rondeau Trip 2010

	Species	Dates of Observations				Total
		13	14	15	16	
1	Common Loon	1				1
2	Double-crested Cormorant	3	25	10	4	42
3	Turkey	20	6		1	27
4	Great Blue Heron	10	15	2	2	29
5	Great Egret		1			1
6	Black-crowned Night Heron	1				1
7	Turkey Vulture	25	4	10	5	44
8	Canada Goose	✓	50	✓	✓	C
9	Trumpeter Swan	2				2
10	Mute Swan	1				1
1	Wood Duck	2			1	3
2	Gadwall		5			5
3	Mallard	15	8	3	2	28
4	Shoveler		2			2
5	Blue-winged Teal		4		2	6
6	Green-winged Teal			2		2
7	American Wigeon		3			3
8	Lesser Scaup		6			6
9	Black Scoter		10			10
20	Red-breasted Merganser		2			2
1	Common Merganser		1			1
2	Ruddy Duck			1		1
3	Osprey	2	4	1		7
4	Bald Eagle			1		1
5	Northern Harrier				1	1
6	Sharp-Shinned Hawk		2	1		3
7	Cooper's Hawk	1				1
8	Red-tailed Hawk	4			3	7
9	Broad-winged Hawk		1			1
30	American Kestrel	1			1	2
1	American Coot		1			1
2	Black-bellied Plover		100+			100+
3	Killdeer	3	1	1	3	8
4	Lesser Yellowlegs				1	1
5	Spotted Sandpiper	1	2	1		4
6	Dunlin		50			50

	Species	Dates of Observations				Total
		13	14	15	16	
7	Short-billed Dowitcher		8			8
8	Sanderling		2			2
9	Little Gull		1			1
40	Bonaparte's Gull		200+			200+
1	Ring-billed Gull	✓	✓	✓		A
2	Herring Gull	1	✓	✓	✓	C
3	Caspian Tern	1	4			5
4	Common Tern	2	70			72
5	Forster's Tern		100+		3	100+
6	Black Tern		1			1
7	Rock Pigeon	✓	✓	✓	✓	C
8	Mourning Dove	5	10	5	10	30
H	Whip-poor-will			H		H
9	Common Nighthawk			1		1
50	Chimney Swift	2	20	2		24
1	Ruby-throated Hummingbird		8	2	1	11
2	Belted Kingfisher		1		1	2
3	Red-headed Woodpecker		1	6		7
4	Red-bellied Woodpecker			5		5
5	Downy Woodpecker	2	4	2	1	9
6	Hairy Woodpecker	1				1
7	Northern Flicker	3				3
8	Pileated Woodpecker	1				1
9	Eastern Phoebe	1			1	2
60	Eastern Wood-Pewee		3	1	H	4
1	Willow Flycatcher		1			1
2	Least Flycatcher		25	5+		30+
3	Great Crested Flycatcher		2	H		2
4	Eastern Kingbird	2	6	6	4	18
5	Warbling Vireo	4	5	4		13
6	Philadelphia Vireo		1	1		2
7	Blue-headed Vireo		4			4
8	Red-eyed Vireo		6	3	H	9
9	White-eyed Vireo		1			1
70	Blue Jay	6	100+	6	H	100+
1	American Crow	✓	✓	✓	✓	C

	Species	Dates of Observations				Total
		13	14	15	16	
2	Horned Lark		H	3		3
3	Purple Martin		4	2		6
4	Tree Swallow	10	✓	10	25	45+
5	N. Rough-winged Swallow	1			20	21
6	Bank Swallow	1	1	1		3
7	Cliff Swallow		1			1
8	Barn Swallow	✓	✓	✓	✓	C
9	Black-capped Chickadee	20		2	4	26
H	Tufted Titmouse		H			H
80	White-breasted Nuthatch			2		2
1	House Wren	4	12	3	2	21
H	Carolina Wren		H			H
2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	2			3
3	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	10	12	4	H	26
4	American Bluebird			1		1
5	Veery	3	4	1	2	10
6	Swainson's Thrush	2	1	1		4
H	Wood Thrush		H	H	H	H
7	American Robin	✓	✓	✓	✓	C
8	Gray Catbird	2	✓	6		8
9	Mockingbird				1	1
90	Brown Thrasher		H	2	H	2
1	European Starling	✓	✓	✓	✓	C
2	American Pipit		1			1
3	Cedar Waxwing	2			H	2
4	Hooded Warbler		1			1
5	Orange-crowned Warbler	1	2	1		4
6	Palm Warbler		5		2	7
7	Golden-winged Warbler		1			1
8	Blue-winged Warbler		1			1
9	Tennessee Warbler		10			10
100	Nashville Warbler		10	4		14
1	Northern Parula		5	1		6
2	Yellow Warbler	20	✓	✓	10	C
3	Chestnut-sided Warbler		✓	✓	1	C
4	Magnolia Warbler		15	2	6	23

	Species	Dates of Observations				Total
		13	14	15	16	
5	Cape May Warbler		5		3	8
6	Black-throated Blue Warbler		25		2	27
7	Yellow-rumped Warbler		2		4	6
8	Black-throated Green Warbler		25	H	H	25
9	Blackburnian Warbler		10		1	11
110	Bay-breasted Warbler		10		1	11
1	Blackpoll Warbler		5	H	H	5
2	Black-and-white Warbler		10	2	2	14
3	American Redstart		5		2	7
4	Prothonotary Warbler			1		1
5	Ovenbird	1	1	H		2
6	Common Yellowthroat	H	20	6		26
7	Wilson's Warbler		2	1		3
8	Canada Warbler		2			2
9	Connecticut Warbler		1			1
120	Cerulean Warbler		1			1
1	Mourning Warbler		1			1
2	Kirtland's Warbler		1m			1
3	Scarlet Tanager		5	4		9
4	Eastern Towhee			2		2
5	Chipping Sparrow			4		4
6	Song Sparrow	5	2	2	4	13
7	Lincoln's Sparrow		2			2
8	Swamp Sparrow	3-10	6			10+
9	White-throated Sparrow	1	8	4	1	14
130	White-crowned Sparrow		2	20		22
1	Field Sparrow		2			2
H	Savannah Sparrow				H	H
2	Northern Cardinal	1	2		H	3
3	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	8	4	1	14
4	Indigo Bunting		4			4
5	Blue Grosbeak			1		1
6	Red-winged Blackbird	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
7	Eastern Meadowlark	1				1
8	Common Grackle	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
9	Brown-headed Cowbird	✓	✓	✓	✓	A

	Species	Dates of Observations				Total
		13	14	15	16	
140	Orchard Oriole		30			30
1	Baltimore Oriole	4	30	10	2	46
2	House Finch		1			1
3	American Goldfinch	20	3	20	10	53
4	House Sparrow		✓	✓	✓	C

H heard only - 4 species

✓ present in numbers - not counted

C common

A abundant

Point Pelee Butterfly List 2010

	Dates				Total
	13	14	15	16	
Skippers					
Juvenal's Duskywing			1		1
Swallow tails					
Pipevine Swallowtail		2			2
Black Swallowtail		10	5	2	17
Spicebush Swallowtail		3			3
Whites and Yellows					
Cabbage White		5	20	10	35
Common Sulphur			1	1	2
Nymphalids					
Question Mark		10	5		15
Milbert's Tortoiseshell			1		1
American Lady		5	10		15
Red Admiral	10	30	25	10	75
Monarch		2	3		5

Point Pelee Odonata List 2010

Libellulidae - SKIMMERS

Tramea carolina Carolina Saddlebags Rondeau P.P. May 15, 2010

The 2010 Fall and Christmas Bird Counts

Ottawa-Gatineau Fall Bird Count

The annual Fall Bird Count will be held Saturday October 23 to Sunday October 24 2010, beginning at 3:00 pm on the Saturday, and ending at 3:00 pm on the Sunday. The post-count compilation (free pizza, coffee, soft drinks and dessert for all participants!) will be held after the count on Sunday, at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden Interpretive Centre from approximately 4:30 – 8:00 pm.

Participants for the Ontario side may contact Eve Ticknor at 613-737-7551 or email edticknor@sympatico.ca. Those who wish to participate on the Québec side may contact Garry McNulty for the northwest sector at 819-684-9861 or email gmcnulty@videotron.ca or contact Daniel St-Hilaire for the northeast sector at 819-776-0860 or email nodan@videotron.ca.

Ottawa-Gatineau Christmas Bird Count

This year's Ottawa-Gatineau CBC will be held on Sunday December 19. Please contact Eve Ticknor (see above) to participate on the Ontario side. For the Québec side, please contact Daniel St-Hilaire (see above). Details re: the post-count compilation and dinner will be provided to participants by the sector leaders, closer to the date of the event.

We encourage you to come out for these great traditional birding events in the Ottawa-Gatineau area! You don't need to be an "expert" birder to join in—even counting birds at your feeder from the comfort of your own home can be an important contribution. The more participants the better, to discover what's out there in our area during the fall and winter seasons!

Persistence doesn't pay off for Peregrines

Anouk Hoedeman

This was an unusual year for the Ottawa Peregrine Falcon Watch. Our resident breeding pair, Diana and Connor, didn't manage to hatch any eggs. But they did confound experts around the world, and may have broken the record for the longest known brooding by Peregrine Falcons.

The nesting season began with a false start in April, when Diana was seen brooding near the northwest corner of the Crowne Plaza Hotel at Albert and Lyon Streets. On April 26, Chris Traynor (Falcon Watch veteran and chair of the OFNC Birds Committee) could find no sign of either falcons or eggs. By May 4, they had established a nest on the southeast side, in the same spot as their 2009 nest. By May 14, they were sitting on three eggs, although we don't know exactly when full-time incubation began.



As the expected hatching date neared in June—Peregrine eggs take about 33 days to hatch—I began sharing nest-monitoring duties with Chris. Every day, one of us patiently observed the nest by telescope from a rooftop across the street, waiting for the adult to give us a glimpse of the eggs so we could see if any had hatched.

By June 18, after Diana and Connor had incubated the eggs at least 35 days, we concluded the nest had failed. Still, with Chris now on vacation, I continued monitoring for another week just in case full incubation had started later than we thought.



In the meantime, Falcon Watch coordinator Eve Ticknor contacted the Ministry of Natural Resources to ask if they would like to collect the eggs for examination once the birds abandoned the nest.

When I checked on June 22, Diana was still sitting, but had pushed one egg out of the nest. I took this as a sign that she would abandon the nest soon enough, but I still wanted to check on the status of the remaining two eggs. When Diana stood up, I got a big surprise: There were still three in the nest!

The only logical conclusion was that she had laid another egg, which seemed like a strange development. I knew that if their eggs fail to hatch, birds sometimes establish a new nest and try again. But a bird laying a new egg while still incubating

an old clutch in the same nest? I had never heard of such a thing.

Nor, it turned out, had anyone else. I contacted a number of experts, including my fellow OFNC Birds Committee members, the Canadian Peregrine Falcon Foundation, a Peregrine Falcon specialist in Great Britain, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, among others. They in turn consulted other experts. But no one could recall a similar occurrence among any bird species, much less explain our local raptors' nesting behaviour.

Neither could anyone tell me if the new egg might be fertilized. So I continued to monitor the nest, first to see if Diana would lay any more eggs (she didn't), and later to see if the new egg would hatch (it didn't).

Chris conducted the last few nest checks while I was on vacation. Those persistent Peregrines were still brooding on Aug. 6, but abandoned the nest by Aug. 24. We don't know exactly what day they left, but since the three eggs were still perfectly intact on Aug. 24, the adults probably continued sitting well beyond Aug. 6.

What we do know for sure is that Diana and Connor spent *at least* 94 consecutive days brooding, which is unprecedented as far as we can tell. (We did hear from a Finnish raptor expert who once had a Tengmalm's Owl still sitting after 92 days.)

We also have no idea why the eggs didn't hatch, but it's not unheard of among this still-threatened species, which was almost wiped out by pesticide use in the 1940s, '50s and '60s. In fact, the success rate for Ottawa's falcons is just 44 per cent. Since 2006, Diana has incubated 14 eggs, of which six hatched. Horizon, the original resident female from 1997 to 2005, incubated 29 eggs, of which 13 hatched. She also had a complete nest failure in 1999. Connor, meanwhile, is getting on in years: he began breeding here in 1998, which makes him at least 13 years old. Peregrine Falcons don't usually live more than 15 years in the wild.

Checking the nest for eggs and hatchlings is usually a minor part of the OFNC's Peregrine Falcon Watch. The main task falls to the many dedicated volunteers who monitor the chicks as they learn to fly, and rescue them if they get stranded on the ground or in a difficult spot. With no chicks to fledge, most volunteers didn't get a chance to participate this year.

I was lucky to have had a chance to monitor the Peregrine Falcons this summer. It was a fantastic experience, even if the novelty of sitting on the roof of a 19-storey building in the searing sun, driving rain and/or gale-force winds did eventually wear off. I had a rare opportunity to watch the birds up close and to photograph them through my scope. I observed their behaviour over time and began to discern

individual characteristics, habits, flight paths and perches. They in turn seemed comfortable with my presence, often preening or nodding off while I watched. Yet the biggest thrill was witnessing the unfolding and still unsolved mystery of the extra egg.



We all look forward to Diana and Connor trying again next year. Let's hope they have better luck — and a much shorter brooding period — in 2011.

Peterson Field Guide to Birds of Western North America

Ken Allison

It is impossible to pick up a new Peterson guide without comparing it with previous editions. This is the fourth edition of Peterson's western bird guide and the first to come out since his death in 1996.

This version has a number of important improvements over previous editions. Probably the change that I welcomed the most was the inclusion of small range maps beside the text and an illustration of each species. Having the range maps readily available on the species page is a big help to those who are visiting the coverage area and have a poor idea of range details. Even better, larger images of the range maps with explanatory notes are printed at six to the page at the back of the book so that more detail is available.

Many of the illustrations have been recycled from previous editions of this guide, and from the eastern guide as well. The illustrations are generally good to excellent. I have a few quibbles. Why have they left Lesser Black-backed Gull half-hidden behind the Greater Black-backed? The gull section is generally weak, with inadequate coverage of immature plumages, especially. There is probably little incentive to improve this now that the Peterson Field Guide Series has a gull guide. Why do they only show pigeons and doves in flight? Flight images are important, but birders often have to identify these birds when they are perched on the ground or in a tree. There are some pages I really liked, such as a comparison of immature cormorants in flight.

There are about 25 species in this edition that were not included in the last one. Twelve of these are the result of species splits in recent years, such as Cackling Goose, Gunnison Sage Grouse and Wilson's snipe. Other additions are because of new introductions, like Himalayan Snowcock and Eurasian Collared-Dove. The rest are primarily additions due to increased coverage of the area resulting in new accidental species being found. On the other hand, over 70 species have been dropped since the previous edition of the guide. These included mostly accidentals, particularly Asian migrants that have been reported once or twice from Attu and other Alaskan islands. At least one species was removed due to its extirpation in North America—the Crested Mynah. As someone who visited Vancouver in the

1970s, I find it hard to believe that such a well-established species could have declined to the vanishing point so quickly.

So, what can be said about this guide? Well, if you already have the previous edition, unless the map accessibility is worth the price to you, then there is little incentive to buy this book. On the other hand, if you are visiting the west and are looking to purchase a field guide for your trip, then this is an excellent choice. All the species the average birder is likely to encounter are well-covered and well-illustrated.

Roger Tory Peterson. 2010. *Peterson Field Guide to Birds of Western North America*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, Boston and New York. 491 pp.

Peterson Field Guide to Birds of Eastern and Central North America

Peter Hall

For many people, the name most associated with birdwatching is Roger Tory Peterson. My very first bird field guide forty-plus years ago was written and illustrated by him. With his plates of painted birds in life-like form, and those important arrows pointing to diagnostic features, identification of a bird in the field (even through my then cheap binoculars) became possible.

The Peterson Field Guide publishers have now come out with the sixth edition (75 years since the first). It is in a slightly larger format than the earlier editions. While most of the images are Peterson's (many digitally enhanced) and have appeared in many of his guides over the years, there are a few new paintings by others of birds recorded in the eastern part of this continent since Peterson's death in 1996. Other revisions include an update of the taxonomy (for example, geese, swans and ducks come first in the book), name changes (for example, Oldsquaw to Long-tailed Duck), and new maps reflecting new bird distribution knowledge.

Another interesting feature of the book is a foreword by Peterson's son, Lee Allen Peterson. His insights into his father's personality and intense approach to birds add a personal touch to the guide. He writes that "Dad always likened the process of writing a field guide to serving a prison sentence. The projects are always lengthy, and the spatial and visual constraints pronounced."

The book is laid out in a fashion similar to most field guides these days. There is a short introduction on how to identify birds and with brief sections covering such topics as bird songs and calls, bird nests, conservation, maps and ranges, habitats and subspecies.

The vast majority of the book is the plates on each right hand page with a short text for each species and a small distribution map on the left-side page. At the end of the plates are the large versions of the range maps (six per page). Finally, there is a life list and an index.

The Peterson field guide series now has a lot of competition, particularly for North American birds. Comparison is inevitable and I will finish by offering my own thoughts. While I do have some loyalty to Peterson due to personal history, I have moved in more recent years first to the National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America and then to the Sibley guides published by the National Audubon Society. I love the detail of the Sibley paintings and the larger number of images of the seasonal, regional and age variations of the birds. However, both for beginners and for seasoned birders, the new Peterson guide can fill the bill (excuse the pun).

Roger Tory Peterson. Peterson Field Guide to Birds (sixth edition) 2010. Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, Boston, New York.

Bright Wings: An Illustrated Anthology of Poems About Birds

Murray Citron

This book has 119 poems about birds and 54 full-page paintings of birds. It is 7.5" by 6" and is on high-quality glossy paper. At Chapters it is found in the poetry section, not in the nature section.

Each of the Sibley paintings is accompanied by a brief note about the bird shown. The oldest poems are by Catullus and Chaucer, but most of the poems are contemporary. The editor has tried to avoid the obvious. Keats' Nightingale and Shelley's Skylark are not present. The birds that attract the most poems are, surprisingly, blackbirds and sparrows.

The collection begins with a poem about Audubon. About half way through there is one about the Peterson guide. The last poem in the book is called *Rara Avis*.

During the last hundred years there has been a lot of poetry that could be called rare, to the extent that readers have become rare birds. The poems in this book are mostly good poems, and are also reader-friendly. They show not only the variety of birds, but the variety of human responses to them. When Thomas Hardy meets an aged thrush, he hears himself singing. When D. H. Lawrence confronts a ruby-throated hummingbird, it is an apparition that can be watched through aeons, but never understood.

The publishers likely considered this book a good prospect for the gift market. Readers of *Trail and Landscape* may feel they deserve a copy, even if they have to buy it for themselves.

Edited by Billy Collins
Paintings by David Allen Sibley
Hardback, 268 pages, published 2010
Columbia University Press, \$22.05

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Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions & Lectures Committee.

For further information,
call the Club number (613-722-3050).

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: *Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.*

REGISTERED BUS TRIPS: *Make your reservation for Club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (Payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing. Your cooperation is appreciated by the Committee so that we do not have to wait until the last moment to decide whether a trip should be cancelled due to low registration. In order for the Club to offer a bus trip, we need just over 33 people to register. If fewer than 30 register, we have the option of cancelling the trip or increasing the cost. Such decisions must be done a week in advance, so we encourage anyone who is interested in any bus trip to register as early as possible. We also wish to discourage postponing the actual payment of bus fees until the day of the event.*

EVENTS AT THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE: *The Club is grateful to the Museum for their cooperation, and thanks the Museum for the use of these excellent facilities. Monthly meetings are held in the theatre in the basement. Attendees may have to pay \$5 parking per vehicle.*

BIRD STATUS LINE: *Phone 613-860-9000 to learn of recent sightings or birding potential in the Ottawa area. To report recent sightings use the 613-860-9000 number and stay on the line. This service is run on behalf of the Birds Committee and is available to members and non-members.*

Saturday
9 October
8:00 a.m.
to
12 noon

BRACKET FUNGI, TREE LICHENS, AND FERNS

Leaders: Otto Loesel (819-778-2556) and Irwin Brodo

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot near Pizza Pizza, Richmond Road at Assaly Road
OR meet Otto at 8:45 a.m. at P17, Gatineau Park, 400 metres past the junction of Hwy 105 and the road to Wakefield.

In October, when most of the flowers have gone and the leaves are starting to fall, fungi, lichens and ferns become more conspicuous. Bracket fungi, lichens growing on trees and ferns should be easy to find. Otto will take us on a nice 3 km loop in the southern section of Gatineau Park. Sturdy footwear will be required. If steady rain is forecast, the excursion will be cancelled. If you are uncertain, phone Otto at 819-778-2556 the evening of Friday, October 8 to confirm the outing.

Tuesday
12 October
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
Business

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

Thinking Big About Ecosystems, Evolution and Life

Speakers: John and Mary Theberge

Location: Canadian Museum of Nature (VMMB), Metcalfe and McLeod Streets, Theatre, Basement.

7:30 p.m.
Formal
Program

The "mystery of mysteries" is how life has managed to persist, despite repeated global catastrophes, for almost four billion years on such a restless and changeable planet, resulting - today - in the richest diversity of all. The secrets of success lie in organization. In this illustrated talk, John and Mary Theberge take us on a journey of discovery to the wild places where they have studied wildlife. Using the rapidly expanding knowledge about the natural world, they extract meaning from the wood duck's plumage, and the ways Labrador caribou illustrate the principles of population regulation, and the significance of *the ptarmigan's dilemma*—which is the title of their newest book. Summing up, they reflect on the significance of natural processes in an increasingly human dominated world.

Car pooling on excursions is very much encouraged and that is why we usually try to meet at a convenient bus stop with a good place to leave a car unattended for a few hours. Please chip in for gas.

Saturday
16 October
7:15 a.m.
to
5:00 p.m.

LAKE DORE & SHAW WOODS

Leader: Terry Higgins

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot near Pizza Pizza, Richmond Road at Assaly Road. This outing will introduce novice birders to a new and exciting place to bird outside the City of Ottawa. Lake Dore, near Pembroke, is known for good numbers of water birds in the fall. Loons, grebes, gulls and ducks are often plentiful. Since unusual species show up in the fall as well, we will hope for rarities. We will scan the lake from various vantage points and then enjoy a picnic lunch, before heading off to the nearby Shaw Woods, a protected area of old growth forest. The trail is 2.3 km long and is described as easy to moderate. There are a few hilly parts, but no serious climbing. This will be a general interest walk, appreciating all aspects of natural history and enjoying the fall colours. Please dress for the weather, keeping in mind that the weather in October can change, and wear footwear for walking/hiking. Bring enough food and drink for a full day, including your picnic lunch. A hot drink is recommended. Binoculars and scopes will be useful to scan the lake. Transportation will be by car pool. We hope to take as few cars as possible, so please be prepared to share transportation. The trip will be cancelled if rain is forecast for the region. If in doubt, you may contact Terry the night before at thiggins001@sympatico.ca.

Sunday
17 October
9:30 a.m.
to
about
noon

TREE IDENTIFICATION IN GATINEAU PARK

Leader: Jean Lauriault (Fenja Brodo, 613-723-2054, will be at Lincoln Fields)

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot near Pizza Pizza, Richmond Rd at Assaly Rd **OR** at the Lauriault Trail parking lot in Gatineau Park at 10:00 a.m. Join Jean (author of *Identification Guide to the Trees of Canada* and an Associate of the Canadian Museum of Nature) on a nature hike to learn how to identify trees using your senses. The forest consists primarily of hardwoods: sugar maple, beech, birch, white ash and red oak, as well as pine, spruce and hemlock. The warm and dry climate also supports species that are uncommon further north such as white oak, eastern white cedar, hackberry and rock elm. Dress appropriately for the weather. Wear comfortable walking or hiking shoes (no sandals). Don't forget to bring a water bottle.

Sunday
17 October
8:00 a.m.
to
12 noon

BIRDING TRIP ALONG THE OTTAWA RIVER

Leader: Dave Britton

Meet: Britannia Conservation/Mud Lake on Cassels Road near the entrance to the Filtration Plant.

Locations will include Britannia Conservation Area, Andrew Haydon Park and Shirleys Bay for mid-fall migrants (both land and waterbirds). Although the terrain is flat, there may be wet or muddy trails so boots are advisable. Bring binoculars. Pack a snack and water. The walk will proceed, rain or shine.

Saturday
23 October
3:00 p.m.
to
Sunday
24 October
3:00 p.m.

OTTAWA-GATINEAU FALL BIRD COUNT

This is one of the Club's annual birding events. You don't need to be an "expert" birder to join in—even counting birds at your feeder from the comfort of your own home can be an important contribution. The more participants the better, to discover what's out there in our area during the fall and winter seasons! The post-count compilation (free pizza, coffee, soft drinks and dessert for all participants!) will be held after the count on Sunday, at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden Interpretive Centre from approximately 4:30 – 8:00 pm.

Participants for the Ontario side may contact Eve Ticknor at 613-737-7551 or email edticknor@sympatico.ca. Those who wish to participate on the Québec side may contact Garry McNulty for the northwest sector at 819-684-9861 or email gmcnulty@videotron.ca or contact Daniel St-Hilaire for the northeast sector at 819-776-0860 or email nodan@videotron.ca.

Sunday
31 October
8:00 a.m.
to
about
12:30 p.m.

OCEAN BIRDING

Leader: Bernie Ladouceur (vbladouceur@rogers.com)

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot near Pizza Pizza, Richmond Road at Assaly Road.

Our focus will be on species that are on their way to sea. A unique time of the year: we will be searching for loons, grebes, brant and other geese, scoters and other diving ducks, and gulls. We will look at the other birds too! Bring a drink and a snack, if you think you will need it. This trip will go, rain or shine.

Car pooling on excursions is very much encouraged and that is why we usually try to meet at a convenient bus stop with a good place to leave a car unattended for a few hours. Please chip in for gas.

Sunday
7 November
7:45 a.m.
to
about
12:30 p.m.

(Please adjust
your clocks
for the end
of Daylight
Savings Time
that morning)

BIRDING AT STONY SWAMP

Leader: Gillian Mastromatteo (613-599-6115)

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot near Pizza Pizza, Richmond Road at Assaly Road
OR Jack Pine Trail parking lot #9 at about 8:00 a.m.

The Jack Pine Trail, located in Stony Swamp, is a wonderful trail to visit in all seasons. In early November, we can expect to see a few lingering migrants such as juncos, kinglets, and White-throated Sparrows, as well as the year-round resident chickadees, nuthatches, creepers and woodpeckers. If we are lucky, we may see some unusual ducks on the ponds or the first winter visitors such as American Tree Sparrows. If time permits, we will visit the Richmond Lagoons on Eagleson Road to look for migrating waterfowl. Bring binoculars, a morning snack, a scope if you have one, and, of course, sunflower seeds for the chickadees! This outing will be cancelled if it rains on the day of the trip.

Tuesday
9 November
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
Business

7:30 p.m.
Formal
Program

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

CONOPIDAE: THE FLY OF A THOUSAND FACES

Speaker: Joel Gibson

Location: Canadian Museum of Nature (VMMB), Metcalfe and McLeod Streets, Theatre, Basement.

Commonly referred to as thick-headed flies, members of Conopidae exhibit a wide range of body shapes and life histories. Some species are excellent mimics of bees and wasps. Many species gather on the same hilltops year after year to mate. All species are parasitoids of other insects. Most members of one remarkable genus (*Stylogaster*) follow army ants and attack cockroaches, grasshoppers and crickets displaced by the advancing hoard. While some species prey exclusively on a single host species, others generalize on a wide range of hosts. Their impact on pollinating bees and wasps may be significant, but has been little studied. Mimicry, parasitism, hilltopping, pollination, DNA Barcoding: this talk will touch on all of these diverse topics. It will also include tips for observing conopids in the wild as well as easy ways to identify some of the 35 species found in Eastern North America.

Saturday
13 November
8:00 a.m.
to
about
12:30 p.m.

LATE FALL BIRDING

Leader: Roy John (613-748-9963)

Meet: Britannia Conservation on Cassels Road near the entrance to the Filtration Plant.

Locations will include Britannia Conservation Area, Andrew Haydon Park and Shirleys Bay for mid-fall migrants (both land and water birds). Although the terrain is flat, there may be wet or muddy trails so boots are advisable. Bring a drink and a snack, if you need it. This trip will go, rain or shine.

Sunday
5 December
1:00 p.m.
to
about
3:00 p.m.

FAMILY OUTING TO STONY SWAMP

Leaders: Holly Bickerton (613-730-7725) and Fenja Brodo (613-723-2054)

Meet: Moodie Dr., Parking Lot No. 8, south of Hunt Club Rd.

These trails are fun to explore and include boardwalks that take us to open waters. Dress warmly for the weather, bring binoculars if you have them and seeds for tempting birds to your hands—always a thrill. We also plan to visit the Wild Bird Care Centre to see how injured birds are taken care of.

Tuesday
14 December
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
Business

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING **ARCTIC FLORA**

Speaker: Lynn Gillespie

Location: Canadian Museum of Nature (VMMB), Metcalfe and McLeod Streets, Theatre, Basement.

Lynn, botanist and Research Scientist at the Canadian Museum of Nature, has worked extensively in the Arctic. Her work includes documenting the flora of the Canadian Arctic through extensive collecting, particularly in the poorly known regions, often adding new localities and range extensions to numerous plant species. Experience the Arctic through Lynn's eyes.

7:30 p.m.
Formal
Program

Sunday
19 December

OTTAWA-GATINEAU CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Another traditional event! Please contact Eve Ticknor (613-737-7551 or email edticknor@sympatico.ca) to participate on the Ontario side. For the Québec side, contact Daniel St-Hilaire (819-776-0860 or email nodan@videotron.ca). Details about the post-count compilation and dinner will be provided by the sector leaders, closer to the date of the event.

Car pooling on excursions is very much encouraged and that is why we usually try to meet at a convenient bus stop with a good place to leave a car unattended for a few hours. Please chip in for gas.

**Sunday
2 January**

**30TH DUNROBIN-BRECKENRIDGE CHRISTMAS BIRD
COUNT**

To participate, please contact Bruce Di Labio at 613-839-4395 or by e-mail at bruce.dilabio@sympatico.ca. For more information (map and other details), please browse Bruce's website at <http://www.dilabiobirding.ca>.

**Tuesday
18 January**

7:00 p.m.

Review of

Minutes

7:30 p.m.

**Meeting called
to order**

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

THE 132ND ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Location: Canadian Museum of Nature (VMMB), Metcalfe and McLeod Streets, Theatre, Basement.

The Council for 2011 will be elected at this meeting. There will be a brief review of the activities in 2010 and a statement of the Club's finances will be given. This is an opportunity to meet most of the Club's Executive and the chairs of the various committees and find out what makes your Club tick.

**SURVEY OF CLUB INTEREST IN A POSSIBLE OVERNIGHT
FEBRUARY TRIP:**

One of our trip leaders has offered to lead an overnight winter birding trip in Algonquin Park in mid to late February. You may see grey jays, black-backed woodpeckers and possible boreal chickadees on the Mizzy Lake trail. Birding on this trail in winter requires either snowshoes or cross-country skis. There is a \$15 per day admission to Algonquin Park. Club members would stay at their own expense on Saturday night on either side of the park in either Dwight or Whitney, Ontario. If individuals want to bird some of the other trails over the weekend, the leader could certainly suggest places for them to visit on their own. If you are interested, please tell Christine Wong at christinew391@yahoo.ca by October 31. If enough Club members are interested (maximum number of 20 people), the trip will be advertised in the next *Trail & Landscape*.

DEADLINE: Material intended for the January - March issue must be in the editor's hands by 1 November, 2010. Mail your manuscripts to:

Karen McLachlan Hamilton

2980 Moodie Drive, Nepean, ON, K2J 4S7

H: (613) 838-4943; email: hamilton@storm.ca

ANY ARTICLES FOR TRAIL & LANDSCAPE?

Have you been on an interesting field trip or made some unusual observations?

Write up your thoughts and send them to Trail & Landscape

URL of our site:
www.ofnc.ca

WEBMASTER's email
webmaster@ofnc.ca

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